

REMARKS

Summary of the Advisory Action

The Examiner advises that amended claims 17-31 require further consideration and search. However, the Examiner has kindly indicated that the § 112 rejections have been overcome.

The Examiner notes that the amendments to the specification raise issues of new matter.

Applicant's Reply

As previously submitted applicant has amended claims 19 and cancelled claims 19 and 20 for clarity and consistency. Claim 17 in particular recites that:

“wherein said wafer-holding cassette/loading station is disposed ~~along a linear axis in front of said vacuum chamber, extending through~~ wherein said cooling plate and said heating plate are disposed one in front of the other in said vacuum chamber, and wherein said internal and external handling devices are configured to move said wafers ~~along said linear axis from said wafer holding cassette in front of the vacuum chamber to the said cooling plate and said~~ heating plate in said vacuum chamber and back.”

Applicant respectfully submits that no new matter is introduced by this amendment, which is fully supported in the written description. (See e.g., “front” in ¶¶ [0031], [0037] and [0040], and Figures 1 and 2).

Amendments to the Specification

For greater clarity, applicant has amended the specification ¶ [0021] to include an explicit description of this geometrical feature. In particular, in ¶ [0021] under the section heading “Brief Description of the Drawings” Figure 1 is now described as showing “that the”

cooling plate, heating plate and the loading station for receiving a wafer cassette may be disposed one in front of the other substantially about a linear axis (e.g., running parallel to the rails of the internal handling system)."

Applicant respectfully submits that the amendments to the specification are fully supported by the specification and the drawings.

As the Examiner correctly notes FIG. 1 shows a perspective view of the inventive apparatus from a view point above and to the left of apparatus.

Applicant respectfully submits that this perspective view categorically shows that cooling plate (8), heating plate (7) and loading station (1) are disposed one in front of the other about a linear axis running parallel to rails (11). This can be readily verified geometrically by extrapolating lines to the perspective view point or by comparing the angles of the different corners in FIG. 1. Applicant, for example, notes that even in perspective view it is readily apparent that processing chamber (6) is rectangular, and the base plate on which it (6) rests is rectangular. Loading station 1 is attached to the front edge of the base plate. Further, the front edge of the base plate, the front face of processing chamber (6) and its rear wall 14, and port 5 (i.e., the vertical interface plate of loading station 1) are all parallel and at the same angle (i.e. perpendicular) to the rails 11. This linear axis is parallel to the side edges of processing chamber 6. Therefore, applicant is puzzled by Examiner's remark that the figures do not show that the cassette is disposed along a linear axis extending through the heating and cooling plates.

Applicant requests reconsideration.

Conclusion

Applicant respectfully submits that this application is now in condition for allowance.

Reconsideration and prompt allowance of which are requested.

If there are any remaining issues to be resolved, applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner should kindly contact the undersigned attorney for a telephone interview.

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